DESIGNING AND VALIDATING A COMPREHENSIVE INSTITUTION-WIDE DEI NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	Institutions with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) must evaluate their praxes for equity, recognizing that campuses must be inclusive communities that celebrate diversity. Further, teaching and learning experiences should provide mirrors, windows, and doors, have cultural validity, afford multiple mechanisms for student success, be centered around the assets of students, build knowledge, extend perspectives, and foster empathy.
Background	A state university system, located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States, has a strategic plan that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion with goals that include the conduct of research on DEI, promoting best practices to enhance inclusion and endorse equity, and nurturing DEI education that encourages students to be informed and engaged citizens and social change agents in our democracy.
	A minority-serving institution located in this system has also prioritized justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) with activities that include evaluating and assessing current programming and services; introducing a JEDI institutional learning goal and supporting general education requirement; using surveys to measure faculty, student, and staff perceptions; and exploring culturally responsive practices throughout teaching and learning. Accordingly, in 2024, a quality improvement project was proposed that involves the development, delivery,

	and reporting of a comprehensive JEDI needs assessment of the community using a mixed methods approach.
Methodology	This paper outlines the process by which a mid-Atlantic HBCU has engaged in a comprehensive JEDI needs assessment. More specifically, thirteen specific steps are discussed:

  1. Identification of goals
  2. Establishment of research questions
  3. Review of literature and existing tools
  4. Consultation with experts
  5. Identification of Methodology
  6. Preparation of draft instruments
  7. Check of readability and face validity
  8. Expert panel review
  9. Institutional Review Board review and approval
  10. Pilot study
  11. Distribution and data collection
  12. Analysis and reporting of findings
  13. Internal validity testing and use of results |
Contribution	The instruments prepared as a result of this endeavor are shared in this paper and are available for adoption and customization with approval and attribution.
Findings	The surveys were closed in December of 2024. Internal validity testing was conducted via the application of Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha analysis results indicated high internal consistency and reliability.
Recommendations for Researchers	It is hoped that by sharing processes and instrumentation, more institutions will decide to engage in similar comprehensive climate studies.
Impact on Society	It is the goal of the authors that this paper contributes to the body of literature on DEI in higher education.
Future Research	The survey results will be reported and included in a future paper, and the information gathered will be used to inform qualitative assessment measures.
Keywords	DEI, JEDI, diversity, equity and inclusion, culturally responsive teaching, CRT, HBCU, inclusion, intersectional theory, decolonization, inclusive education, critical pedagogy

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